



School Counselor Student Learning Objectives Handbook



www.dese.mo.gov

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator – Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	1
What is a Student Learning Outcome? Why are SLOs Important?	
What are the Challenges?	
SLO Process for School Counselors	2
SLO Process for Districts/LEAs	4
Using SLOs in the Overall Evaluation.....	5
Appendix	i
SLO Template	
SLO Approval Checklist SLO	
Summative Report	
SLO Results Summary	

OVERVIEW



What is a Student Learning Objective?

A Student Learning Objective (SLO) is a measurable, long-term goal of academic, social/emotional or career development growth that represents a portion of a school counselor's impact on student learning. While the term "SLO" may seem new, the concept is actually a very familiar one in Missouri. Essentially, SLOs represent the process of gathering and analyzing student data, using that data to set student growth goals, and then assessing whether students have met those goals at the end of the activity, intervention, or instruction. What is new about SLOs is that they offer a formalized, collaborative process for using student growth data to show evidence of impact.

Why are SLOs Important?

School Counseling Practice

The heart of SLOs—setting goals for students and measuring progress towards those goals—is all about effective school counseling practice. Moreover, using SLOs gives administrators an opportunity to let data results drive professional learning opportunities for school counselors.

Staff Collaboration

Just as importantly, SLOs promote collaboration between school counselors, teachers, other support personnel and administrators by supporting building and district goals through school counseling activities, interventions and instruction.

Evidence of Impact

SLOs provide an opportunity to examine student growth data by gathering baseline data, setting measurable goals for improvement and ultimately assessing growth.

What are the Challenges?

Administrators should be prepared to assist school counselors in developing SLOs and consider the following points:

- The role of a school counselor is complex, leading to difficulty determining one SLO of focus. This is important to consider when using SLOs as part of the evaluation process and emphasizes how critical it is for the administrator to fully understand the role of the school counselor.
- In the scope and practice of school counseling, there are many extenuating circumstances that can affect student growth. School counselors often provide services to students who are faced with adversity and many challenges that influence outcomes. Goals for student growth should be a feature of SLOs, but it may take more than one year to determine the measure of effectiveness.
- Students must have access to school counseling activities, interventions and instruction on a consistent basis to maximize effectiveness.

SLO PROCESS FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS

*Note: The steps of this process may occur in a different order than they appear in this list.

1. Choose the Area of Focus and Identify the Evidence of Impact

The SLO Process begins with determining an area of focus based on a need for improvement. Selection of one SLO is recommended, two is the maximum. Using the School Counselor Evaluation, the school counselor and administrator should work together to identify a standard and indicator to target. When developing the School Counselor Growth Plan, an aligned and appropriate SLO can be used to support the evidence of impact and measure student growth. This requires careful selection by both the school counselor and the administrator to ensure that the evidence of impact is high quality. Comprehensive school counseling program activities have a positive impact on student growth in a variety of areas, which include but are not limited to attendance, discipline referrals, academics, college and career readiness and graduation rates.

Furthermore, comprehensive school counseling program activities have a positive impact on student growth demonstrated through the results from a variety of assessments:

State Generated Assessments: MAP which includes Grade Level Assessments and EOC
Industry Generated Assessments: ACT, SAT, AIMSweb, Aquity, STAR
District or School Generated Assessments: Departments, Grade-Level Teams, finals etc.
Classroom Generated Assessments: pre/post assessments, exit tickets, surveys, projects

2. Estimate the Time Frame Needed

The school counselor must then decide how much time students need to demonstrate the desired growth. As stated above, school counseling interventions are complex and can take a significant amount of time to show growth. Ultimately, an SLO must offer enough time for the expected growth to occur from the beginning of the activity/intervention to the end.

3. Gather Baseline Data

It is necessary to determine the current level of performance or knowledge in the chosen

area of focus. Records review, pre-assessments, or surveys can help school counselors identify the baseline. By analyzing baseline data, school counselors can ensure the selection of appropriate comprehensive school counseling activities, interventions, or instruction. The SLO Template presents a framework for recording baseline data and ensuring the SLO includes all of the necessary elements.

4. Identify Student Populations

School counselors must identify the student population to which each SLO will apply based on the determined need. The student population consists of students who are participating in the school counseling activity, intervention or instruction to support the identified standard and indicator.

5. Set Growth Targets

A growth target is the amount of improvement the school counselor expects to see from the intended student population. Typically, a growth target will be set in terms of the evidence of growth expected from an activity, intervention, or instruction from the beginning to the end.

When setting a growth target, school counselors should consider the baseline data of the student population and set effective and achievable goals for each individual. Then, the school counselor should develop a rationale for why the targets are important and appropriate.

6. Regularly Track Progress

To ensure that students are on track to reach their SLO goal, the school counselor must monitor progress by recording formative data along the way. Accurate formative data allows the school counselor to adjust the activity, intervention or instruction as necessary and continuously inform students of their progress. The SLO Summative Report is a tool for monitoring progress towards those goals.

7. Maintaining Documentation

Results should be recorded in the SLO Scoring Guide to document overall change.

8. Review Performance

Finally, the school counselor should meet with the administrator to discuss progress towards achieving the SLO using data which demonstrates evidence of impact on student growth.

SLO PROCESS FOR DISTRICTS

Policies

Timeline

Approval
Authority

Progress &
Feedback

Review &
Plan

1. Determine Policies

Districts should determine their policies around SLOs based on their unique needs and priorities. Such policies may include what the timeframe will be, what forms will be used for documentation, or what personnel will have authority to approve SLOs. Regardless of which topics are addressed, establishing policies is a crucial step towards giving school counselors and administrators clear guidelines around SLOs.

2. Set the Timeframe

Again, the timeframe for SLOs should reflect districts' unique needs and priorities. Each step in the process needs adequate time in order to recognize growth.

3. Establish a Method for Approval

The district should provide clear guidelines on which individuals or groups of individuals should be in charge of approving SLOs on the front end. Whether this authority is a single administrator or a committee, districts will need to give clear directions on how such decisions will be made.

4. Monitor Progress and Provide Feedback

At the building-level, administrators must be sure to communicate with school counselors throughout the SLO process and offer feedback where appropriate. This communication is critical to improving school counselor practice and impacting student growth.

5. Review Performance and Plan Ahead

At either the district-level or the building-level, plans to review performance at the end of the intervention must be in place. School counselors need to know how performance will be reviewed. The results should then be used to plan ahead and determine next steps.

USING SLOs IN EVALUATION

Step 1: Score the SLO

Mrs. Johnson, a school counselor is working with ten sixth grade students who are academically struggling and have multiple discipline referrals. Mrs. Johnson decides to provide theory-based individual and small group counseling sessions to reduce discipline referrals. Mrs. Johnson used the number of discipline referrals to monitor progress and adjust the individual and small group counseling sessions. At the end of the sessions, the percentage of students who met their growth target is calculated. Mrs. Johnson finds that 80% of her students met their growth target.

Here is a summary of her results using the SLO Results Summary:

Behavior Incidents Monthly	Target Incidents Monthly	# Students Meeting Target	# Students	% Meeting Target	Overall Results	
Baseline 50+	25	10			#	% Students
Month 1	40	7	10	70		
Month 2	35	5	10	50		
Month 3	30	9	10	90		
Month 4	25	8	10	80	8	80%

*Baseline ranges are presented for illustrative purposes and may not be appropriate for your SLO

Step 2: Complete the Summative Evaluation

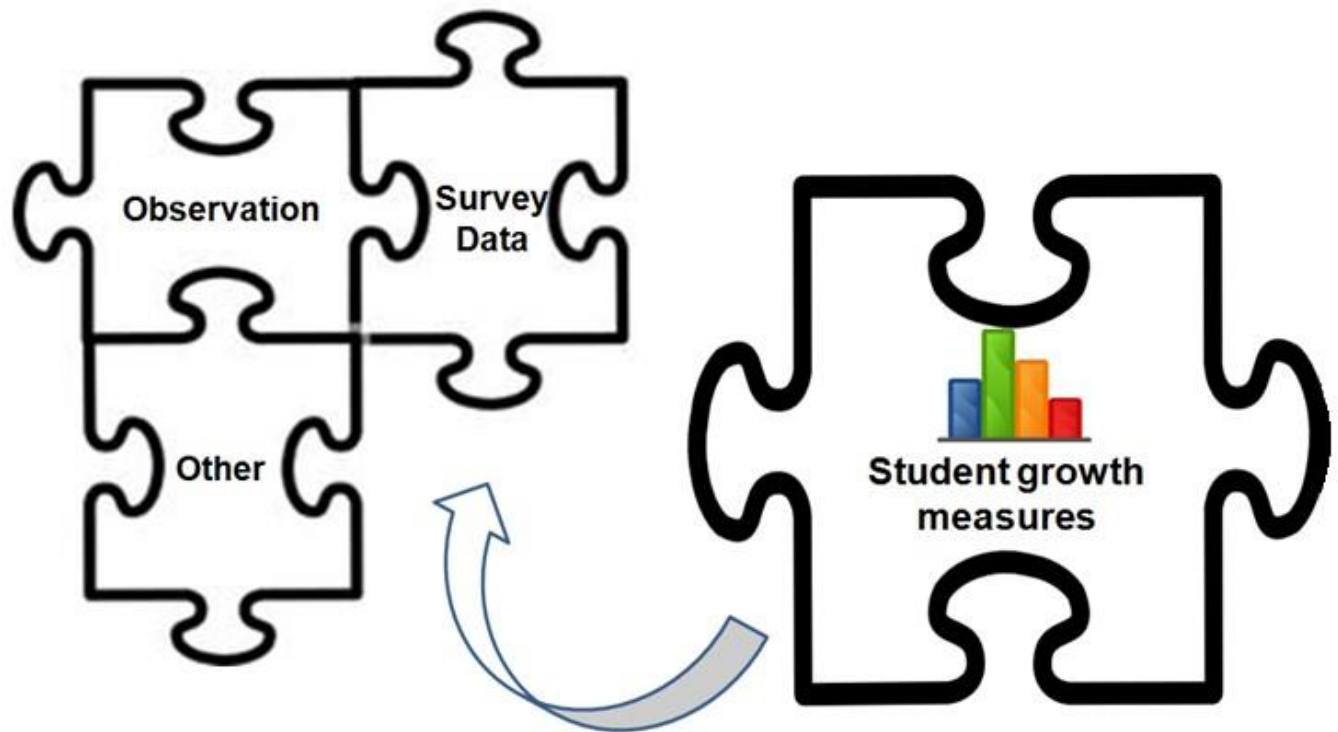
Principal Jane Doe is responsible for Mrs. Johnson's evaluation and follows Missouri's School Counselor Evaluation Protocol to complete Mrs. Johnson's summative evaluation form.

The summative evaluation pulls together the data that has been collected and provides a final overall statement of the effectiveness of the interventions used. It considers all five standards as well as a focused view with regard to the specific quality indicators the counselor has worked on throughout the year. The SLO supports evidence of impact on student growth within the specific quality indicator.

As part of her growth plan, Mrs. Johnson selected Quality Indicator 1.2: Counseling Theories and Interventions. She provided theory based individual and small group counseling sessions to improve discipline referrals. Mrs. Johnson showed effective practice and impact on specific targets intended to improve the discipline referrals of the ten sixth grade students, as evidenced by the SLO results in which 80% of students met their target goal.

Other Options

For those school systems that opt to use another model, student growth will still need to be included as a factor in school counselor evaluations. Administrators should use multiple measures to develop a balanced overall performance rating that includes evidence of student growth. Data collected as part of the SLO process can provide this evidence of student growth, which reflects the impact on student outcomes. Administrators are encouraged to adapt the resources included in this handbook as needed to better support alternative evaluation systems.



A Piece of the "Educator Effectiveness" Puzzle

APPENDIX

- A. SLO Template**
- B. SLO Approval Checklist**
- C. SLO Summative Report**
- D. SLO Scoring Guide**

School Counselor Name: _____

Evidence of Impact Used:

Learning Content

(Identify the comprehensive school counseling activity, intervention, or instruction to be implemented. Include the state curriculum standards the SLO addresses if applicable)

Interval of Intervention

(How much time will students have to reach their goals? A unit? A semester? The full year? Be as specific as possible)

Student Population(s)

(Describe the student population(s) included in this SLO. Include IEP, EL, and Free and Reduced Price Lunch (F/RL) data)

#IEP #EL #F/RL

Targets

Baseline Data

Expected Growth

Activities, Interventions, Instruction

Rationale

(State how the growth targets are appropriate and rigorous. Explain how the identified activities, interventions, or instruction are appropriate to reach those growth targets)

Results

Total # of
Students

Students Met Target

% Students Met Target

Comments

Student Learning Objective Approval Checklist

This checklist provides a set of criteria with which to assess the quality of a proposed Student Learning Objective, or SLO. If the SLO adequately addresses all of the listed criteria, it is likely to be a useful form of evidence in the school counselor's evaluation and a tool for professional growth. It is recommended that all areas in need of revision be addressed prior to approving the SLO.

School Counselor Name: _____

Approval Authority: _____

Component	Criterion	Approved	Needs Revision
Evidence of Impact	Measures growth, gain, or change expected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provides the data needed to decide whether the objective is met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is reliable, valid, rigorous, and credible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is a standardized assessment, if possible (approve if not possible)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Content	Identifies the essential school counseling program content area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	States the concept or skill to be taught	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aligns with standards and indicators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interval of Intervention	Clearly states the time students have to reach the goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is appropriate to content complexity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is realistic and attainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Represents a long enough period to demonstrate desired growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Population	Identifies the specific population(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Includes a majority of the students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Conveys an understanding of the population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Specifies any agreed-upon exceptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growth Target	Draws upon baseline data, where available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Predicts expectation or gain anticipated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Allows all students to demonstrate growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is rigorous yet realistic for all students in the identified population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instructional Strategies	Identifies method of activity, intervention or instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Includes additional interventions where needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are observable or documentable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rationale	Includes how the objective is connected to student needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	States how and why the activities, intervention, instruction and growth targets are appropriate and rigorous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SLO Approved By: _____

Approval Authority Signature

Date: _____

© 2014 Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (adapted for MCSCP 2017)

This results summary may be used to record overall measures of student performance relative to the targets included in the SLO. The completed form may serve as supporting documentation of student impact in a school counselor's evaluation.

School Counselor Name: _____

SLO Title: _____

Detailed Results					Overall Results
<i>(Provide the baseline score ranges used to set differentiated growth targets. Enter the number of students in each range, as well as the number and percentage meeting the growth target)</i>					
Baseline	Target	# Meeting Target	# Students	%Meeting Target	# Students Meeting Target
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			% Students Meeting Target
		_____ Out of _____			
		_____ Out of _____			

Comments:

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education would like to offer a special thank you to the following education organizations for providing support and resources towards the development of this handbook:

Center on Great Teachers & Leaders

Ohio Department of Education

Austin Independent School District

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS
at American Institutes for Research

Ohio | Department
of Education

